



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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May 17, 2010

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. T. Fujioka", is written over a horizontal line.

SACRAMENTO UPDATE

This memorandum contains pursuit of County positions on three bills related to: 1) establishment of a planning workgroup to develop a joint renewal or re-certification form for the Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs Programs; 2) require local Emergency Medical Services agencies to adhere to standards issued by the California Emergency Medical Services Authority for medical technician personnel; and 3) establish the California Economic Security Task Force to study measures to reduce poverty by 2020; a status on County-sponsored legislation related to information sharing for the prevention, identification, management or treatment of child abuse or neglect; and an update on a County-advocacy measure related to the Independent Living Program for former foster youth.

Pursuit of County Position on Legislation

AB 963 (Ammiano), which as amended on January 25, 2010, would require the State Department of Health Care Services (SDHCS) to form a stakeholder planning workgroup to streamline the eligibility process for the Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs Programs by creating a standardized renewal form. The measure would require the SDHCS to consult with counties, the State Department of Social Services (SDSS), representatives of the Statewide Automated Welfare System consortia, and others to develop the joint form.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

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The Medi-Cal Program administered by the SDHCS and the Food Stamp and CalWORKs Programs administered by the SDSS provide benefits to persons with limited incomes. Existing law requires recipients of these programs to renew or re-certify their eligibility on a specified monthly, quarterly, or bi-annually basis.

AB 963 would require the stakeholder planning workgroup to develop a renewal and re-certification form for Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs Programs, and any related policies and procedures. The workgroup would consider modifications to:

- Minimize burdens on the recipients and encourage retention of Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs benefits;
- Eliminate duplicative requests for information or documentation;
- Align renewal and re-certification dates for the various programs;
- Develop policies to allow both paper and electronic versions of the form to provide options for electronic and telephonic renewal of eligibility, elimination of face-to-face interview requirements, and electronic verification of case information upon receipt of necessary Federal waivers; and
- Ensure the recipient data and information shared between programs is safeguarded.

According to the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), AB 963 would: 1) incorporate Federal and State eligibility requirements; 2) align re-certification dates for the Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs Programs; and 3) reduce the number of forms to be completed by recipients. This measure would help streamline and simplify the eligibility process. In addition, providing an on-line application could potentially reduce traffic in welfare offices, simplify County operations, reduce mailing and postage costs, reduce aid terminations due to no receipt or receipt of late re-certification forms, and result in speedier case decisions for recipients who file an appeal on case actions. DPSS indicates that the operational impact of AB 963 is unclear because the details of the implementation and requirements are unknown at this time. However, implementing a new standardized form could potentially increase administrative costs County-wide for training, duplicating, automating and distributing forms, and developing new policies and procedures for staff in all three programs.

The Department of Public Social Services and this office support AB 963 in concept until the fiscal impact of this bill is known. Support in concept is consistent with existing Board policy to support options to simplify the administration of public

assistance programs such as Medi-Cal, Food Stamp, and CalWORKs including seeking any necessary Federal waivers. **Therefore, the Sacramento advocates will support AB 963 in concept.**

AB 963 is co-sponsored by The Children's Partnership, United Way of the Bay Area, and Western Center on Law & Poverty. This bill is supported by 100% Campaign, Asian Community Mental Health Services, California Children's Hospital Association, California Immigrant Policy Center, California Medical Association, Health Access California, and others. There is no registered opposition on file.

AB 963 is awaiting a hearing in the Senate Health and Human Services Committees.

AB 2456 (Torrico), which as amended on April 22, 2010, would require local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies to adhere to the standards issued by the California EMS Authority regarding the functions, certification and licensure of emergency medical technician personnel.

Existing law establishes the California EMS Authority which is responsible for the coordination and integration of all State activities concerning EMS, including establishing the minimum standards for policies and procedures necessary for medical control of the EMS system. Existing law also authorizes counties to develop an EMS program and designate a local EMS agency responsible for planning and implementing a local system.

AB 2456 would require local EMS agencies to adhere to standards developed by the California EMS Authority, including the following: 1) local accreditation; 2) competency-based written and skills examination; 3) demonstration of skills competency; 4) medical control for the use of the optional skills; 5) approval of service providers using approved optional skills; 6) additional maintenance of accreditation for optional skills; 7) continued competency in the optional skills; 8) field internships; 9) evaluation criteria for trainees; and 10) approval and evaluation of advanced emergency medical technician service providers. The measure also would specify that any policies and procedures developed by a local EMS agency that are not in accordance with the standards developed by the California EMS Authority are subject to approval by the Director of the California EMS Authority and the EMS Commission prior to implementation.

The Department of Health Services notes that the Board of Supervisors adopted the EMS Program to ensure that every person in the County who calls 911 for a medical emergency receives the same level of quality services from medical technicians and paramedics and that every person has access to appropriate medical facilities, such as trauma and cardiac centers. The Department indicates that AB 2456 would remove

local authority to plan systems, determine medical protocols, and develop guidelines that are appropriate for the County's specific needs. In addition, the measure would require the implementation of treatment protocols at the County's expense which may not be appropriate for our EMS system. The Department also notes that removing local authority for EMS standards would impact quality assurance and medical oversight, compromising public safety.

The Department of Health Services and this office oppose AB 2456. Therefore, consistent with existing Board policy to oppose proposals that reduce County medical control over local EMS providers, **the Sacramento advocates will oppose AB 2456.**

AB 2456 is sponsored by the California Professional Firefighters and supported by the California Department of Forestry Firefighters Local 2881. The measure is opposed by the California State Association of Counties, California Hospital Association, Emergency Medical Services Administrators Association of California, Emergency Nurses Association, San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office, and American Medical Response.

AB 2456 is scheduled for a hearing by the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 19, 2010.

SB 1084 (Liu), which as amended on April 29, 2010 would establish the California Economic Security Task Force to study measures to reduce poverty by 2020. The Task Force would include legislators, State agency secretaries, members of the public, the business community, and representatives from key stakeholder groups. The Task Force would begin holding quarterly meetings on or before July 1, 2011 and would remain in effect until July 1, 2013.

The measure would require the Task Force to: 1) gather information on the State's anti-poverty programs, evaluate their efficiency, and provide a detailed interim report to the Governor and Legislature with recommendations to maximize the effectiveness of State programs and services on or before July 1, 2012; and 2) complete a comprehensive final report with long-term recommendations and unified strategy to create a self-sustaining entity to lead and coordinate the State's efforts to reduce poverty by 50 percent by 2020 on or before July 1, 2012.

According to an analysis by the Senate Committee on Business, Professions and Economic Development, the State dedicates significant resources to many programs aimed at reducing poverty and increasing economic security for low-income persons. These programs are spread across many State and county agencies which limits coordination. In addition, the State does not currently have a comprehensive inventory

of statewide anti-poverty programs or a statewide plan for reducing poverty and increasing economic security. As a result, many Californians are not receiving benefits for which they are eligible and the State and counties may be foregoing Federal funds for vital human services programs.

The Department of Public Social Services estimates that 21.9 percent of children in Los Angeles County live in poverty. The Department indicates that there has been a significant increase in the number of persons applying for cash assistance and Food Stamps and that it expects the high unemployment rate will continue to result in a high demand for services, at a time when State and County revenues are limited. The Department notes that SB 1084 is an important step to help the State and counties maximize resources for programs to help low-income persons. Further, the bill would help to identify areas for collaboration or integration across programs administered by various State and county agencies and may enhance the use of limited resources in a manner that would improve service access and outcomes for needy families and children.

The Department of Public Social Services and this office support SB 1084. Therefore, consistent with existing Board policy to support proposals for State and local governments to work together as partner to balance resources, eligibility benefits and forge new partnerships with business, nonprofit, and religious organizations to promote self-sufficiency, **the Sacramento advocates will support SB 1084.**

SB 1084 is co-sponsored by the County Welfare Directors Association of California, Insight Center for Community Economic Development, Western Center on Law and Poverty, and Women's Foundation of California. This bill is supported by Aging Services of California, Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services, California/Nevada Community Action Partnership, California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and others. There is no registered opposition on file.

The measure is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Appropriations Committee on May 17, 2010.

Status of County-Sponsored Legislation

County-sponsored AB 2322 (Feuer and Bass), which as amended on April 29, 2010, would clarify and strengthen the ability of county departments to share records for the prevention, identification, management or treatment of child abuse and neglect, and expand the type of data that may be entered on the Family and Children's Index, passed the Assembly Human Services Committee on May 11, 2010 by a vote of 6 to 0. This measure now proceeds to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

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Status of County Advocacy Legislation

County-supported SB 654 (Leno), which would expand the eligibility for the Independent Living Program to former foster youth who are placed with a non-relative guardian on or after the child's eighth birthday, passed the Assembly Human Services Committee on May 11, 2010 by a vote of 6 to 0. This measure now proceeds to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

We will continue to keep you advised.

WTF:RA
MR:VE:GA:er

c: All Department Heads
Legislative Strategist
Local 721
Coalition of County Unions
California Contract Cities Association
Independent Cities Association
League of California Cities
City Managers Associations
Buddy Program Participants